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Report of the Secretary-General on the United Nations Disengagement Observer Force

(for the period from 16 November 1999 to 19 May 2000)

I. Introduction

1. The present report gives an account of the activities of the United Nations Disengagement Observer Force (UNDOF) during the last six months in pursuance of the mandate contained in Security Council resolution 350 (1974) and extended in subsequent resolutions, most recently by resolution 1276 (1999) of 24 November 1999.

II. Situation in the area and activities of the Force

2. During the period under review, the ceasefire in the Israeli-Syrian sector was maintained without serious incident, and the Force's area of operation remained calm. The Force supervised the area of separation by means of fixed positions and patrols to ensure that no military forces were in it. It also carried out fortnightly inspections of equipment and force levels in the areas of limitation. Liaison officers from the party concerned accompanied the inspection teams. Both sides continued to deny inspection teams access to some of their positions and imposed restrictions on the Force's freedom of movement.

3. The Force continued to assist the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) with facilities for mail and the passage of persons through the area of separation. Within the means available, medical treatment was provided to the local population on request. UNDOF and ICRC, in close cooperation with the authorities, facilitated student exchanges and other functions, including weddings, in the area of separation.

4. Minefields in the UNDOF area of operation, especially in the area of separation, continued to be a concern, posing a threat to UNDOF personnel and local inhabitants. Syrian engineers have cleared mines in this area, under UNDOF supervision.

5. The Force Commander and his staff maintained close contact with the authorities of Israel and the Syrian Arab Republic.

6. As at 30 April 2000, UNDOF comprised 1,053 troops from Austria (366), Canada (188), Japan (45), Poland (361) and Slovakia (93). The Force was also assisted by 78 military observers of the United Nations Truce Supervision Organization (UNTSO). Major General Cameron Ross continued as Force Commander. A map showing the Force's deployment is attached.

III. Financial aspects

7. By its resolution 53/226 of 8 June 1999, the General Assembly appropriated the amount of $35.4 million gross for the maintenance of the Force for the period from 1 July 1999 to 30 June 2000. The proposed budget for the maintenance of the Force for the period from 1 July 2000 to 30 June 2001 (A/54/732) is currently under consideration by the General Assembly. Subject to the Assembly's decision, the cost of maintaining UNDOF, at its currently authorized strength, is estimated at $34.9 million gross for the period beginning on 1 July 2000, exclusive of

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the amounts for the support account for peacekeeping operations and the United Nations Logistics Base at Brindisi, Italy. Therefore, should the Council decide to extend the mandate of the Force beyond 31 May 2000, the cost of maintaining the Force will be limited to the amounts indicated above.

8. As at 30 April 2000, unpaid assessed contributions to the Special Account for UNDOF for the period from the inception of the Force to 31 May 2000 amounted to $17 million. Total outstanding assessed contributions for all peacekeeping operations at the same date amounted to $2,109.7 million.

IV. Implementation of Security Council resolution 338 (1973)

9. In deciding in its resolution 1276 (1999) to renew the mandate of UNDOF for a further period of six months, the Security Council also called upon the parties concerned to implement immediately its resolution 338 (1973) and requested the Secretary-General to submit, at the end of the period, a report on the developments in the situation and the measures taken to implement that resolution. The search for a peaceful settlement in the Middle East and, in particular, the efforts undertaken at various levels to implement Security Council resolution 338 (1973) were dealt with in my report on the situation in the Middle East (A/53/550), submitted in pursuance of General Assembly resolution 52/54 of 9 December 1997.

V. Observations

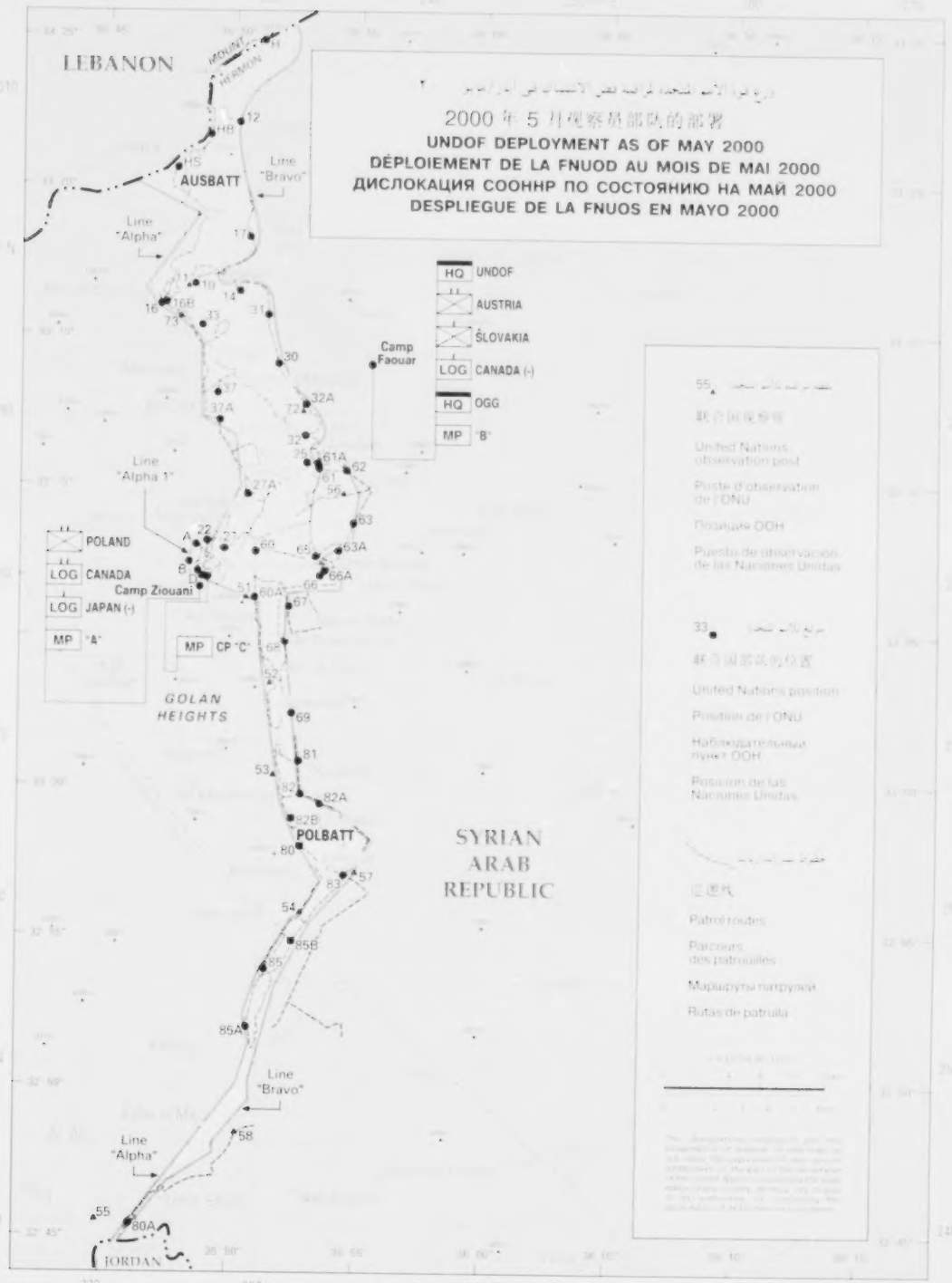
10. UNDOF, which was established in May 1974 to supervise the ceasefire called for by the Security Council and the agreement on disengagement between Israeli and Syrian forces of 31 May 1974, has continued to perform its function effectively, with the cooperation of the parties. The situation in the Israeli-Syrian sector has remained quiet.

11. Despite the present quiet in the Israeli-Syrian sector, the situation in the Middle East continues to be potentially dangerous and is likely to remain so, unless and until a comprehensive settlement covering all aspects of the Middle East problem can be reached. I hope that determined efforts will be made by all concerned to tackle the problem in all its aspects, with a view to arriving at a just and durable peace settlement, as called for by the Security Council in its resolution 338 (1973).

12. In the prevailing circumstances, I consider the continued presence of UNDOF in the area to be essential. I therefore recommend that the Security Council extend the mandate of the Force for a further period of six months, until 30 November 2000. The Government of Israel has given its assent to the proposed extension. The Government of the Syrian Arab Republic has also expressed its agreement.

13. In making this recommendation, I must draw attention to the shortfall in the funding of the Force. At present, unpaid assessments amount to some $17 million. This sum represents money owed to all Member States that contribute the troops who make up the Force. I appeal to all Member States to pay their assessments promptly and in full and to clear all remaining arrears.

14. In conclusion, I wish to pay tribute to Major General Ross and the men and women serving with UNDOF. They have performed with efficiency and devotion to duty the important tasks assigned to them by the Security Council. I take this opportunity to express my appreciation to the Governments contributing troops to UNDOF and to those that provide the UNTSO military observers assigned to the Force.



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Report of the Secretary-General on the implementation of Security Council resolutions 425 (1978) and 426 (1978)

1. The present report is submitted pursuant to the statement of 20 April 2000 by the President of the Security Council (S/PRST/2000/13) in which the Council, *inter alia*, welcomed my decision to initiate preparations to enable the United Nations to carry out its responsibilities under resolutions 425 (1978) and 426 (1978). As requested by the Security Council, the present report contains my conclusions and recommendations regarding the plans and requirements for the implementation of those two resolutions and all other relevant resolutions.

Introduction

2. In resolution 425 (1978), the Security Council called on Israel to withdraw from all Lebanese territory and, at the request of the Government of Lebanon, decided to establish a United Nations force in Lebanon under the authority of the Security Council. Israel has remained in Lebanon in contravention of resolution 425 (1978). On 17 April 2000, I received formal notification from the Government of Israel that it would withdraw its forces from Lebanon by July 2000 "in full accordance with Security Council resolutions 425 (1978) and 426 (1978)." I was further informed that in so doing the Government of Israel intended "to cooperate fully with the United Nations" (see S/2000/322).

3. Also on 17 April, I informed the Security Council that, having received that notification, I would initiate preparations to enable the United Nations to carry out its responsibilities under those resolutions. As a first step, I sent my Special Envoy, Terje Roed-Larsen, together with the Force Commander of the United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon (UNIFIL) and a team of experts, to meet with the Governments of Israel and Lebanon and concerned Member States in the region, including Egypt, Jordan and the Syrian Arab Republic. The delegation also met with the Palestine Liberation Organization and the League of Arab States. Parallel to that mission, which took place between 26 April and 9 May 2000, I consulted with interested Member States, including those contributing troops to UNIFIL.

Mission of the Special Envoy

4. In Israel, my Special Envoy and his delegation met with the Prime Minister, Ehud Barak, the Minister for Foreign Affairs, David Levy, the Chief of Staff of the Israel Defence Forces, General Shaul Mofaz, and a wide range of technical and military experts. In Lebanon, the delegation met President Émile Lahoud, the Prime Minister and Minister for Foreign Affairs, Salim El-Hoss, other government officials, and the President of the National Assembly, Nabih Berri. In the Syrian Arab Republic, the delegation met the Minister for Foreign Affairs, Farouk Al-Shara'. In Jordan, the delegation was received by King Abdullah and the Minister for Foreign Affairs, Abdul Ilah El-Khatib. In Egypt, the Minister for Foreign Affairs, Amre Moussa, met with the delegation. In Gaza, my Special Envoy met the President of the Palestinian Authority and Chairman of the Executive Committee of the Palestine Liberation Organization, Yasser Arafat. In Cairo, he and his delegation also met with the Secretary-General, Ahmed Esmat Abdel-Meguid, and senior officials of the League of Arab States.

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5. During his mission, my Special Envoy and his delegation reviewed the requirements established under resolutions 425 (1978) and 426 (1978) and discussed how those resolutions could be implemented fully. At each of the meetings, my Special Envoy received assurances of full cooperation from his interlocutors as the United Nations undertakes to fulfil its responsibilities under resolutions 425 (1978) and 426 (1978) and other relevant resolutions.

Resolution 425 (1978)

6. Resolution 425 (1978) established two requirements. First, the Security Council called for strict respect for the territorial integrity, sovereignty and political independence of Lebanon within its internationally recognized boundaries. Second, the Security Council called upon Israel immediately to cease its military action against Lebanese territorial integrity and withdraw forthwith its forces from all Lebanese territory.

7. The Security Council also decided, in the light of the request of the Government of Lebanon, to establish immediately a United Nations interim force for southern Lebanon. This interim force was created for three broadly defined purposes:

(a) Confirming the withdrawal of Israeli forces;

(b) Restoring international peace and security;

(c) Assisting the Government of Lebanon in ensuring the return of its effective authority in the area.

8. In resolution 426 (1978), the Security Council approved the report of the Secretary-General on the implementation of resolution 425 (1978). That report contained, *inter alia*, guidelines for the operations of UNIFIL which would continue to be applicable.

9. The United Nations has not previously been in a position to implement the responsibilities mandated by the Security Council since 1978. It is hoped that the notification on 17 April 2000 by the Government of Israel will lead to the full withdrawal of Israeli forces from Lebanon in accordance with resolution 425 (1978) by July 2000.

10. During the mission of my Special Envoy, United Nations cartographic, legal and military experts examined the technical issues that would need to be addressed in the context of the implementation of resolution 425 (1978). The recommendations contained in the present report are the result of those assessments.

Identifying a line for the purpose of confirming the Israeli withdrawal

11. For the practical purpose of confirming the Israeli withdrawal, the United Nations needs to identify a line to be adopted conforming to the internationally recognized boundaries of Lebanon based on the best available cartographic and other documentary material. The United Nations will then identify physically, on the ground, those portions of the line necessary or relevant to confirming the withdrawal of Israeli forces. In the southern part of the country, Lebanon shares a border with Israel and, in the eastern part, with the Syrian Arab Republic.

12. The United Nations stressed in its consultations with all the parties that it was not seeking to establish an international border, as this was a matter for States to undertake in accordance with international law and practice. Rather, the United Nations was requesting the help of the parties and others in the purely technical exercise of identifying a line for the purpose of confirming compliance with resolution 425 (1978). Whatever line the United Nations uses will be without prejudice to future border agreements between the Member States concerned.

13. The international boundary between Israel and Lebanon was established pursuant to the 1923 Agreement between France and Great Britain entitled "Boundary Line between Syria and Palestine from the Mediterranean to El Hamme". This line was reaffirmed in the Israeli-Lebanese General Armistice Agreement signed on 23 March 1949. Subsequently there were several modifications mutually agreed by Israel and Lebanon. The parties have cooperated with the United Nations in the process of gathering cartographic information necessary for identifying this line. The United Nations has prepared a map based on that information and will mark portions of the line on the ground relevant to the purpose of confirming the withdrawal.

14. Concerning that portion of Lebanon's border that it shares with the Syrian Arab Republic relevant to the Israeli withdrawal, there seems to be no official record of a formal international boundary agreement between Lebanon and the Syrian Arab Republic that could

easily establish the line for the purpose of confirming the withdrawal. On 4 May 2000, the Government of Lebanon informed my Special Envoy that certain farmlands in the Shab'a area located outside the area of operations of UNIFIL as defined since 1978 would be claimed by Lebanon in the context of the requirement under resolution 425 (1978) that Israel withdraw from Lebanon.

15. Once the Government of Lebanon informed the United Nations of its new position regarding the definition of its territory, the United Nations requested the Governments of Lebanon and the Syrian Arab Republic, as well as other Member States in possession of pertinent information, to provide the United Nations with documentation related to the Lebanese-Syrian border.

16. The Government of Lebanon subsequently provided the United Nations with title deeds of Lebanese ownership of farmlands in this area, as well as with documentation indicating that Lebanese governmental and religious institutions had enjoyed, at various points in time, jurisdiction over those farmlands. The Government of Lebanon informed the United Nations of a joint understanding between Lebanon and the Syrian Arab Republic that the farmlands were Lebanese, including a decision of a joint Lebanese-Syrian border committee that concluded in 1964 that the area was Lebanese and that the international border should be redefined consistent with that conclusion. In a telephone conversation with me on 16 May 2000, the Syrian Foreign Minister, Mr. Al-Shara', stated that the Syrian Arab Republic supported Lebanon's claim.

17. On 15 May 2000, the United Nations received a map, dated 1966, from the Government of Lebanon which reflected the Government's position that these farmlands were located in Lebanon. However, the United Nations is in possession of 10 other maps issued after 1966 by various Lebanese government institutions, including the Ministry of Defence and the army, all of which place the farmlands inside the Syrian Arab Republic. The United Nations has also examined six maps issued by the Government of the Syrian Arab Republic, including three maps since 1966, which place the farmlands inside the Syrian Arab Republic. On the basis of the Agreement on Disengagement between Israeli and Syrian forces of 31 May 1974 and its Protocol concerning the United Nations Disengagement Observer Force (UNDOF), which included maps initialled by Israel and the Syrian Arab Republic, the Shab'a farmlands fall within the scope of the area of operations of UNDOF. The area coming under the mandate of UNDOF has remained unchanged until the present time. It follows that in adopting resolutions 425 (1978) and 426 (1978), the Security Council could not have included as part of the UNIFIL area of operations an area which had already formed part of the UNDOF area of operations. It is worth noting that, notwithstanding the conflicting evidence to which I have alluded, and whatever the present understanding between Lebanon and the Syrian Arab Republic, these farmlands lie in an area occupied by Israel since 1967 and are therefore subject to Security Council resolutions 242 (1967) and 338 (1973) calling for an Israeli withdrawal from occupied territory. (A total of 81 maps were available to the United Nations from various sources dating from before and after 1966; 25 of these were issued by the Governments of Lebanon and the Syrian Arab Republic.)

18. In the light of these recent developments and of all the documents in the United Nations possession as reviewed, I recommend to the Security Council that a viable solution, which is without prejudice to the positions of Lebanon and the Syrian Arab Republic concerning their international boundaries, would be to proceed on the basis of the line separating the areas of operation of UNIFIL and UNDOF along the relevant portions of the Lebanese-Syrian boundary. It bears repeating that the adoption of this line by the United Nations for the practical purpose of confirming the Israeli withdrawal from Lebanon in compliance with resolution 425 (1978) is without prejudice to any internationally recognized border agreement that Lebanon and the Syrian Arab Republic may wish to conclude in the future.

19. This UNIFIL-UNDOF line coincides with the border line most commonly found on maps issued by the Government of Lebanon, including those published after 1966. This line has also been accepted by the Government of Lebanon for 22 years in the context of the UNIFIL area of operations. In addition, this same line was approved by the Governments of Israel and the Syrian Arab Republic in their 1974 Disengagement Agreement, and it has thus defined the UNDOF area of operations for 26 years. Finally, this line would not prejudice the existing areas of operation of UNIFIL and UNDOF as approved by the Security Council,

which would be the case if the Shab'a farmlands were redefined as part of the UNIFIL and not the UNDOF area of operations.

20. As soon as the Security Council has made its decision, the technical work of identifying relevant parts of the Lebanon-Israel and Lebanon-Syrian Arab Republic lines on the ground will begin for the purpose of implementing resolution 425 (1978). To begin this task, which will entail field work along the Lebanon-Israel and Lebanon-Syrian Arab Republic lines, the United Nations will require the cooperation of the Governments of Israel, Lebanon and the Syrian Arab Republic.

Requirements for confirming an Israeli withdrawal in compliance with resolution 425 (1978)

21. For the United Nations to confirm that a complete withdrawal has taken place in accordance with resolution 425 (1978), the following requirements will have to be met by the Government of Israel:

(a) Israel must withdraw its military forces and civilian personnel from all Lebanese territory, which, by definition, includes Lebanon's airspace and territorial waters;

(b) It is the responsibility of the Government of Israel to ensure that the de facto force, known as the South Lebanon Army, ceases to exist. This will be necessary for the withdrawal to be considered complete. As has been described in previous reports to the Security Council, SLA is funded and supplied by the Israel Defence Forces, and is fully integrated into Israel's operations and command structure in southern Lebanon. Therefore, as SLA is a part of Israel's presence in Lebanon, a withdrawal that left SLA in place as an effective military force could not be considered complete. Moreover, it would ensure the continuation of hostilities. The following steps are essential:

(i) The command structure of SLA must be dismantled;

(ii) Logistical support and supplies of any type from the Government of Israel must cease;

(iii) Heavy weapons in the possession of SLA, including tanks, artillery and mortars, must be removed or destroyed;

(c) All detainees currently held in Al-Khiam prison must be returned to the legitimate Lebanese authorities. It would be useful to use the good offices of the International Committee of the Red Cross to facilitate the return of such detainees.

Security and safety of personnel of the Force, and cooperation with the parties

22. It is not possible to predict how the security situation in southern Lebanon will evolve in the wake of the expected withdrawal. The concept of operations that is presented in this report provides the UNIFIL Force Commander with the flexibility that he requires to deploy his forces in a manner that would meet the requirements of resolution 425 (1978) and takes into account the need to ensure the safety and security of the peacekeeping troops.

23. The area currently occupied by the Israel Defence Forces and the de facto forces has been the scene of fighting for many years and could remain volatile before, during and after the Israeli withdrawal. It will therefore be crucial for the parties to do their part to calm the situation and cooperate fully with the United Nations in its efforts to stabilize the situation and restore international peace and security. In this connection, the security of United Nations personnel is a central concern. Since the Force's establishment in 1978, 77 members of UNIFIL have lost their lives and 343 have been wounded as a direct result of firing or bomb explosions. The Force's modus operandi and its equipment must reflect these security concerns. Above all, the security of United Nations personnel will depend on the parties. It is incumbent upon them to ensure that those under their command or associated with them, at all levels, respect the international status of United Nations personnel.

24. It should be recalled that the responsibility for ensuring safety and security lies with the competent authorities of the Government of any State. Pursuant to this principle, the Government of Lebanon has the primary responsibility for ensuring the safety and security on and of Lebanese territory. Such safety and security is also to be extended to UNIFIL and its personnel. In this connection, I welcomed the statement

made by President Lahoud on 5 May 2000, in which he confirmed that Lebanon would work to ensure the security and safety of UNIFIL. It should also be recalled that the Government of Lebanon and the United Nations concluded an agreement on the status of UNIFIL in 1995, which provides for the privileges and immunities, rights and facilities necessary for the fulfilment of the tasks of UNIFIL and all its military and civilian members. With the withdrawal of Israeli and de facto forces, UNIFIL will rely on the Government to meet fully its commitments under that agreement.

25. UNIFIL will continue to require the same freedom of movement that it has had since 1978, including across the Lebanese-Israeli border. The Force's logistics and supply lines are dependent on this cross-border movement. The Governments of Israel and Lebanon have indicated to the United Nations that this will be the case.

Operations of the Force to confirm the withdrawal

26. For the purpose of confirming the withdrawal, UNIFIL will dispatch verification teams protected by infantry detachments in armoured vehicles and supported by helicopters. The teams will also be accompanied by engineers to deal with unexploded ordnance and mines in the area. In this connection, I welcome the commitment given by the Government of Israel to my Special Envoy to provide detailed information on the location of mines. The verification teams will move throughout the area to confirm whether the positions held by Israeli forces and SLA have been vacated and whether Israel has withdrawn its military forces and civilians from Lebanon. A continued Israeli presence in Lebanon, including the continued functioning of SLA, will mean that the United Nations will not be able to confirm a complete withdrawal. Should the Israeli withdrawal fall short of the requirements for the United Nations to certify compliance with resolution 425 (1978), I will revert to the Security Council.

Restoring international peace and security

27. Before the reinforcement and redeployment of UNIFIL, I will first confirm to the Security Council that a full withdrawal has taken place in fulfilment of the requirements of resolutions 425 (1978) and 426 (1978) and that there are adequate conditions of security for UNIFIL troops in its area of operations. Following the redeployment, the Force's area of operations would include the area between the eastern and western parts of its current area of deployment and the stretch of land along the international boundary. UNIFIL would use its best efforts to help prevent the recurrence of fighting and to create the conditions for the restoration of the effective authority of the Government of Lebanon in this area.

Assisting the Government of Lebanon in ensuring the return of its effective authority in the area

28. As soon as the United Nations has confirmed that the Israeli withdrawal has been completed in compliance with the requirements established in the present report, the Government of Lebanon should resume the normal responsibilities of a State throughout the area. The Government of Lebanon has informed the United Nations that it will re-establish local civilian administration functions in the area previously occupied by Israel. This will include the assumption of law and order functions through the re-establishment of civilian police forces. The United Nations cannot assume law and order functions which are properly the responsibility of the Government. The Lebanese armed forces should ensure that all national territory falls under the effective authority of the Government. With these actions by the Government of Lebanon, UNIFIL would complete its mission in Lebanon.

29. The Government of Lebanon has assured the United Nations that in re-establishing its authority in the area previously controlled by Israel and SLA the Government will treat the inhabitants of the formerly occupied zone as equal citizens of Lebanon, in accordance with Lebanese law and in respect for the principles of the rule of law and international human rights standards. Over the past two weeks, the senior leadership of the Government of Lebanon has made a

number of reassuring public statements in this regard which I have welcomed. During his meetings in Beirut, the Government informed my Special Envoy that it would accept the assistance of the International Committee of the Red Cross. The President of Lebanon also cited the example of Jezzine where, after the withdrawal of Israeli forces in 1999, there was a smooth return of the authority of the Government, including the resumption of law and order functions. The President and the Prime Minister affirmed to my Special Envoy that the Government of Lebanon would not tolerate acts of vengeance.

30. The Government of Lebanon, together with the United Nations Development Programme, has developed a plan for the reconstruction of southern Lebanon. The United Nations will give its full support to this plan, and calls on donor countries to help the Government through the provision of necessary financial and technical assistance. I envisage an increase in the civilian staff of UNIFIL to facilitate this work.

Resources required by the Force

31. In order to carry out its responsibilities under resolution 425 (1978), in the light of the current and projected security situation in southern Lebanon and taking into account the additional territory that it would have to cover following the Israeli withdrawal, UNIFIL would require phased reinforcement.

32. To enable UNIFIL to carry out its tasks related to confirmation of the Israeli withdrawal, the existing six infantry battalions are being increased and also provided with additional armoured personnel carriers. The Force would also require two additional helicopters with their crews and a number of engineer detachments specialized in explosive ordnance disposal, mine reconnaissance and mine-clearing operations. Additional logistics capability would also be required to support this increase. The total troop strength for carrying out the tasks related to confirming the withdrawal would thus increase from the present level of 4,513 to approximately 5,600.

33. Once the Israeli withdrawal is confirmed and if the security situation permits, UNIFIL would have to be immediately reinforced with two mechanized infantry battalions and the engineer component of the Force would be increased to regimental level. These reinforcements should be deployed immediately after the withdrawal has been confirmed. Monitoring equipment, including that for airspace and territorial waters, would also be required at that time. With these reinforcements, the strength of UNIFIL would be brought to a total of eight battalions plus appropriate support units, or approximately 7,935 peacekeepers.

34. Owing to constraints of time, the troop reinforcements will be required to possess a high degree of self-sufficiency and the capability to deploy to the mission area using their own national assets. This is a requirement if UNIFIL is to have the capacity to fulfil its responsibilities under resolutions 425 (1978) and 426 (1978). The contingents will be selected in consultation with the Security Council and the parties concerned in accordance with the guidelines for UNIFIL approved under resolution 426 (1978).

35. Should the resources requested in the present report not be made available in a timely manner, the consequence could be that the confirmation of the withdrawal would be slowed; UNIFIL could be unable to cover adequately its full area of operations; and, in particular, it would be capable of providing only a limited presence in those areas not covered at present by the Force.

Observations

36. Over the past several days, the situation on the ground in southern Lebanon has begun to change very rapidly. Resolutions 425 (1978) and 426 (1978) called not only for an Israeli withdrawal from Lebanon but provided for the means, supported by UNIFIL, whereby the withdrawal could lead to enhanced conditions for international peace and security and the return of the effective authority of the Government of Lebanon in the area. Unilateral actions which undermine the possibility of fully implementing those resolutions could lead to a situation in which the United Nations would not be a position to carry out its mandated responsibilities. In my view, this would not only have negative consequences for Lebanon itself, but could well have wider implications for the region.

37. For 22 years, United Nations peacekeepers have served in southern Lebanon at the request of the Government of Lebanon. This is one of the longest standing peacekeeping commitments of the United Nations anywhere in the world. The United Nations

feels a special duty to the people of Lebanon to do everything in its power to ensure that resolution 425 (1978) is implemented fully and unconditionally. If all parties concerned commit themselves to meeting this objective, UNIFIL will soon be able to fulfil, finally, the task which it was mandated to do over two decades ago.

38. Time is very short: approximately six weeks remain before the deadline of 7 July 2000 set by the Government of Israel for the completion of the withdrawal of its forces from Lebanon. The present report sets out the minimum conditions and requirements which must be met if resolution 425 (1978) is to be implemented fully and without conditions and if the United Nations is to be in a position to fulfil its responsibilities. An important first step will be for all parties addressed in this report to provide assurances that their full cooperation will be given in implementing the recommendations contained in this report.

39. The United Nations can continue its role only at the request of the Government of Lebanon and with the Government's full support and cooperation. This support is particularly important as it is the principal source of the peacekeeping mission's legitimacy in the eyes of the Lebanese people. The cooperation of all other concerned parties is also vital. In this connection, I appreciate the Palmyra Declaration issued on 4 May 2000 by the Foreign Ministers of Egypt, Saudi Arabia and the Syrian Arab Republic. I hope that all concerned parties in the region and beyond will provide unconditional support for the United Nations to undertake its responsibilities in Lebanon.

40. For the Government of Israel, I have defined the main requirements which would have to be met in order for the United Nations to confirm that the Israeli withdrawal has been completed in full compliance with resolutions 425 (1978) and 426 (1978). These requirements include the withdrawal of Israel's military and civilian personnel from Lebanon; the dismantling by Israel of the SLA command structure, the cessation of logistical support and supplies from Israel to SLA and the removal of its heavy weapons; and the handing over of prisoners in Al-Khiam detention centre. The United Nations will also require the full cooperation of the Government of Israel in identifying the withdrawal line.

41. From the Government of Lebanon, I have requested full cooperation in the process of identifying, on the ground, the line to be used for the purpose of confirming the withdrawal as recommended in this report. The return of the effective authority of the Government will require decisive and prompt action by the Government to resume public services as well as law and order functions and to resume its responsibility for providing for security and safety throughout the area.

42. From the Government of the Syrian Arab Republic, the United Nations will require full cooperation on all relevant matters, including in identifying on the ground that portion of the Lebanese-Syrian boundary necessary to confirming the withdrawal. On 21 May 1991 a Treaty of Brotherhood, Cooperation and Coordination was signed between the Syrian Arab Republic and the Lebanese Republic. In this connection, I greatly appreciated the clear pledge of support for the United Nations made by the Foreign Minister, Mr. Al-Shara', and will count on such support as the United Nations implements its responsibilities under resolutions 425 (1978) and 426 (1978).

43. Lebanese and other armed groups in Lebanon, and Member States having influence over them, must provide their cooperation and support to UNIFIL to implement resolution 425 (1978). Only with the support of all parties concerned will it be possible for peace and security to be restored in southern Lebanon.

44. I must also emphasize that before, during and after the withdrawal all interested parties should exercise maximum restraint both in their actions and in their public statements. It is vital to avoid action or rhetoric that could lead to an escalation of tensions during such a sensitive period.

45. From the States Members of the United Nations, the additional troops required by UNIFIL in the phased reinforcements recommended above must arrive in the theatre in full strength and on time.

46. If the Security Council agrees with the recommendations contained in this report, I will proceed accordingly. My Special Envoy and his team will then return to the region to pursue the implementation of the plans contained in this report. I would also request the General Assembly to provide the necessary financial resources.

47. If the conditions identified in the present report do not materialize in a timely manner, UNIFIL will not be in a position to carry out its mandated tasks. In such a situation I would revert to the Security Council with recommendations, which, in the absence of viable alternatives, may have to include the withdrawal of UNIFIL.

48. Finally, I should like to emphasize once again that, while resolution 425 (1978) stands alone in its requirements, it is my strong hope that the full implementation of that resolution will help to spur progress in the remaining tracks of the Middle East peace process, including the Lebanese, Syrian and Palestinian tracks. The attainment of a just, lasting and comprehensive peace in the Middle East, based on the principle of land for peace and the implementation of Security Council resolutions 242 (1967) and 338 (1973) and other relevant resolutions, is our ultimate, common objective.

Map 4140 United Nations
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Report of the Secretary-General on the situation concerning Western Sahara

I. Introduction

1. The present report is submitted pursuant to Security Council resolution 1292 (2000) of 29 February 2000, by which the Council extended the mandate of the United Nations Mission for the Referendum in Western Sahara (MINURSO) until 31 May 2000 and requested me to provide an assessment of the situation before the end of that mandate. In that resolution, the Security Council supported my intention to ask my Personal Envoy, James A. Baker III, to consult the parties, the Kingdom of Morocco and the Frente Popular para la Liberación de Saguía el-Hamra y de Río de Oro (Frente POLISARIO), and, taking into account existing and potential obstacles, to explore ways and means to achieve an early, durable and agreed resolution of their dispute. The present report covers developments since my previous report to the Council, dated 17 February 2000 (S/2000/131).

II. Developments during the reporting period

A. Visit of the Personal Envoy of the Secretary-General to the region

2. Pursuant to Security Council resolution 1292 (2000), and following consultations with me, my Personal Envoy undertook a visit to the region from 8 to 11 April 2000, for preliminary discussions with the two parties and the two neighbouring countries. On arrival in Algiers on 8 April, Mr. Baker and his delegation were joined by my Special Representative for Western Sahara, William Eagleton. The former United States Assistant Secretary of State for International Organizations, John R. Bolton, participated in the mission of my Personal Envoy as his Deputy.

3. In Algiers, my Personal Envoy was received by the Minister of Justice of Algeria, Ahmed Ouyahia, and also met with the Prime Minister, Ahmed Benbitour, the Minister of the Interior, Yazid Zerhouni, the Chairman of the National Council of Algeria, Bachir Boumaza, and other senior government officials.

4. In the Tindouf area, on 9 April, my Personal Envoy met with the Secretary-General of the Frente POLISARIO, Mohamed Abdelaziz, the Frente POLISARIO Coordinator with MINURSO, M'hamed Khaddad, the Frente POLISARIO representatives in New York and in Washington, Ahmed Bukhari and Moulud Said, and other senior members of the Frente POLISARIO. He also met with the head of the observer delegation of the Organization of African Unity (OAU) to MINURSO, Yilma Tadesse.

5. In Rabat, on 10 April, my Personal Envoy was received by King Mohammed VI, and met with Crown Prince Moulay Rachid, the Prime Minister of Morocco, Abderrahmane Youssoufi, the Minister for Foreign Affairs and Cooperation, Mohamed Benaissa, the Minister of the Interior, Ahmed El Midaoui, the Secretary of State for the Interior, Ali Al Himma, the Moroccan Coordinator with MINURSO, Mohamed Loulitchki, the Permanent Representative of Morocco to the United Nations, Ahmed Snoussi, and other senior government officials.

6. Owing to illness, my Personal Envoy was not able to visit Nouakchott on 11 April, but discussed his mission with the President of Mauritania, Maaouya Ould Sid' Ahmed Taya, on the telephone.

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7. On his return from the region, on 12 April, my Personal Envoy undertook consultations with the Spanish and the French authorities in Madrid and in Paris.

8. I take this opportunity to express my appreciation to the Government of Spain, whose decision to make an aircraft available to my Personal Envoy greatly facilitated his visit to the region.

B. Meeting of the parties under the auspices of the Personal Envoy of the Secretary-General (London, 14 May 2000)

9. Following his preliminary contacts in the region, my Personal Envoy advised me that it would be necessary to convene a meeting between the parties in order to consider the problems in implementing the United Nations settlement plan (S/21360 and S/22464 and Corr.1) and the Houston agreements (S/1997/742, annexes I-III), as well as other possible approaches. I fully concurred with his views and, in letters dated 25 April 2000, invited the parties to hold high-level, face-to-face discussions in London on 14 May 2000, under the auspices of my Personal Envoy. In my letters, it was specified that the discussions would be private and that, as had been the case in the direct talks held under the auspices of my Personal Envoy in 1997, no issue would be considered as finally agreed until every outstanding issue had been agreed. In similar letters, I invited the two neighbouring countries, Algeria and Mauritania, to attend the London meeting as observers.

10. The meeting was held in London on 14 May 2000 as planned. The parties met in face-to-face discussions for the first time since the direct talks held under the auspices of my Personal Envoy in London, Lisbon and Houston in 1997. Algeria and Mauritania sent observer delegations to the meeting.

11. There was a frank exchange of views during the discussions; the meeting was however, inconclusive. At the close of the discussions, my Personal Envoy called on the parties to come forward, at a further meeting which might be held in June, with concrete solutions to the multiple problems of the settlement plan that the parties could agree to, or else be prepared to consider and discuss other ways to achieve an early, durable and agreed resolution of their dispute over Western Sahara.

12. I wish to take this opportunity to express my appreciation to the Government of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland for hosting those direct talks.

C. Appeals process

13. During the reporting period, my Special Representative pursued efforts aimed at finding ways and means to secure a smooth implementation of the settlement plan, in particular with regard to the start of the appeals process following the issuance of the second part of the provisional voter list on 17 January 2000. To that end, he met with the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Morocco at Rabat on 25 March 2000, and with the Frente POLISARIO Coordinator with MINURSO in the Tindouf area on 4 and 18 April. The Chairman of the Identification Commission of MINURSO, Eduardo Vetere, also met with the latter on 18 April.

14. The second round of the appeals process started when the second part of the provisional voter list, containing the names of individual applicants from tribal groupings H41, H61 and J51/52, was communicated by my Special Representative to the two parties on 17 January 2000. On 25 February, in accordance with the six-week period allotted, the Identification Commission closed the receipt of appeals at all its centres (in the Territory, in Morocco, in the Tindouf area of Algeria and in Mauritania). By then, MINURSO had received a total of 54,889 appeals from the second part of the provisional voter list. Preliminary analysis of these appeals shows that the overwhelming majority of appeals filed (53,327) are against exclusion from that list. Of these, 49,138 appeals are from appellants from Morocco and the Territory, most of whom intend to present at least one witness to support their claims. Most of the remaining 1,562 appeals, filed by 22 individuals, challenge the inclusion of applicants in the second provisional voter list for voter eligibility. More than two thirds of these challenges were submitted by persons residing in Morocco or in the Territory. The table contained in annex I to the present report shows the number of appeals by place of filing and broad category.

15. Five meetings of Identification Commission staff were held in Agadir to evaluate experience gained and to plan ahead. Mock sessions and simulation workshops were held at four appeal centres, in order to

test the procedures and modalities for the admissibility and hearing stage.

16. The Identification Commission expects to complete in June 2000 the necessary data-processing and analysis of the 79,000 files received from the first part of the provisional voter list, issued on 15 July 1999. Together with the 54,889 appeals received from the individual applicants of tribal groupings H41, H61 and J51/52, this brings to more than 130,000 the number of appeal files stored electronically by the Identification Commission's information system, which also contains some 244,000 identification files.

D. Military aspects

17. As at 16 May 2000, the strength of the military component of MINURSO stood at 230 all ranks (see annex II). Under the command of General Claude Buze (Belgium), the military component continued to monitor the ceasefire between the Royal Moroccan Army and the Frente POLISARIO military forces, which came into effect on 6 September 1991. The MINURSO area of responsibility remains calm and there has been no indication that either side intends to resume hostilities in the near future.

18. Progress continued in the implementation of the military agreements between MINURSO and the two parties on the marking and disposal of mines and unexploded ordnance and the related exchange of detailed information. The Royal Moroccan Army and the Frente POLISARIO forces conducted a total of 21 operations for the disposal of explosives and ammunition during the reporting period.

E. Civilian police aspects

19. The current strength of the civilian police component of MINURSO stands at 80 civilian police officers, under the command of Inspector General Om Prakash Rathor (India). During the reporting period, the MINURSO civilian police officers continued to assist in the work of the Identification Commission, by ensuring the protection of files and sensitive materials at appeal centres.

F. Preparatory work for the repatriation of Saharan refugees

20. During the reporting period, the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), in close coordination and consultation with MINURSO, continued its preparatory work for the repatriation of Saharan refugees, as provided for under the settlement plan.

21. UNHCR continued the implementation of refugee pre-registration for the repatriation in Tindouf for those refugees who were away from the camps during the earlier registration phase. To date, 119,698 refugees (representing 18,751 family units) and their immediate family members have been pre-registered from the MINURSO provisional lists of voters since the exercise started in August 1997. The vast majority of the refugees continued to express their desire to return only to the Territory east of the berm, owing to fears for their personal safety and security. A joint World Food Programme/UNHCR food assessment mission was undertaken to Tindouf from 9 to 13 March 2000, to determine a new project of assistance and establish enhanced mechanisms for project coordination, reporting and evaluation.

22. Consultations by my Special Representative and UNHCR to initiate cross-border confidence-building measures, including family visits, could not overcome the parties' reservations to implementing such measures. In particular, the Frente POLISARIO continued to express concerns regarding security guarantees in the Territory west of the berm, as was confirmed by the refugees in the Tindouf camps who remained concerned for their own safety and security if they returned to that area.

III. Financial aspects

23. The General Assembly, by its resolution 53/18 B of 8 June 1999, appropriated the amount of $52.1 million for the maintenance of MINURSO for the period from 1 July 1999 to 30 June 2000. With regard to the subsequent financial period, from 1 July 2000 to 30 June 2001, my proposed maintenance budget for the Mission amounts to $46.6 million (equivalent to a monthly rate of some $3.9 million), and has been submitted to the General Assembly for consideration during the second part of its resumed

fifty-fourth session. The Assembly action on the proposed budget is expected shortly. Therefore, should the Security Council approve my recommendation contained in paragraph 28 below with regard to the extension of the mandate of MINURSO, the cost of maintaining the Mission will be within the appropriation provided by the Assembly for MINURSO for the current financial period, 1999-2000, and the monthly rate proposed in my budget for the period 2000-2001.

24. As at 15 May 2000, unpaid assessed contributions to the Special Account for MINURSO amounted to $76.5 million. The total outstanding assessed contributions for all peacekeeping operations at that date amounted to $2,078.2 million.

IV. Observations and recommendations

25. Further to the recommendations and observations contained in my previous report (S/2000/131), and pursuant to Council resolution 1292 (2000), I asked my Personal Envoy to consult the parties and, taking into account existing and potential obstacles, to explore ways and means to achieve an early, durable and agreed resolution of their dispute. I wish to thank Mr. Baker for pursuing his efforts to that end.

26. During his consultations with the parties and the neighbouring countries in the region from 8 to 11 April 2000 and in London on 14 May, my Personal Envoy stressed that the implementation of the settlement plan had been impeded year after year for the past nine years by fundamental differences between the parties over the interpretation of its main provisions, and that the prospects for holding the referendum were as distant as ever.

27. The meeting in London on 14 May was important in that it brought the parties together for face-to-face discussions for the first time since the direct talks conducted under the auspices of my Personal Envoy in 1997. Regrettably, however, the views expressed by the two parties only served to reinforce the United Nations assessment of their widely divergent positions, and neither side offered any constructive suggestions on the way forward. Under such circumstances, my Personal Envoy called on the parties to bring, to a further meeting which could be held in June 2000, specific solutions that could be agreed to, in order to resolve all outstanding settlement plan issues, or be prepared to consider and discuss other ways to achieve an early, durable and agreed resolution of their dispute over Western Sahara.

28. It is my strong hope that, as requested by my Personal Envoy, the parties will come forward with concrete proposals at the proposed meeting. Given the difficulties over the years in bridging their recurrent differences, and the fact that no enforcement mechanism was envisaged in the settlement plan, it would be essential that the parties now offer specific and concrete solutions to the multiple problems relating to the implementation of the plan that can be agreed to or, alternatively, be prepared to consider other ways of achieving an early, durable and agreed resolution of their dispute over Western Sahara. In the meantime, I recommend that the Security Council extend the mandate of MINURSO for a period of two months, until 31 July 2000.

Annex I

Appeals received by area of filing and by category*

Location	*Against exclusion*	*Against inclusion*	*Total*	*Percentage*
Territory	12 650	272	12 922	23.5
Morocco	40 225	1 094	41 319	75.3
Tindouf	422	77	499	0.9
Mauritania	119	30	149	0.3
Total	**53 327**	**1 562**	**54 889**	**100.0**

* Following the issuance of the second part of the provisional voter list on 17 January 2000.

Annex II

United Nations Mission for the Referendum in Western Sahara: contributions as at 16 May 2000

	Military observers	*Troops*	*Civilian police observers*	*Total*
Argentina	1	-	-	1
Austria	4	-	-	4*
Bangladesh	6	-	-	6
China	16	-	-	16
Egypt	19	-	1	20
El Salvador	2	-	-	2
France	25	-	-	25
Ghana	6	7	10	23
Greece	1	-	-	1
Guinea	3	-	-	3
Honduras	12	-	-	12
Hungary	3	-	3	6
Ireland	6	-	-	6
India	-	-	10	10
Italy	5	-	-	5
Kenya	8	-	-	8
Malaysia	13	-	10	23
Nigeria	5	-	10	15
Norway	-	-	2	2
Pakistan	6	-	9	15
Poland	4	-	-	4
Portugal	5	-	9	14
Republic of Korea	-	20	-	20
Russian Federation	25	-	-	25
Senegal	-	-	6	6
Sweden	-	-	10	10
United States of America	15	-	-	15
Uruguay	13	-	-	13
Total	**203**	**27**	**80**	**310**

* In addition to the Force Commander.

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Letter dated 19 May 2000 from the Permanent Representative of Turkey to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

I have the honour to transmit herewith a letter dated 18 May 2000 addressed to you by His Excellency Mr. Aytuğ Plümer, Representative of the Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus (see annex).

I should be grateful if the text of the present letter and its annex, to which is appended a letter from His Excellency Mr. Rauf R. Denktaş, President of the Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus, dated 15 May 2000 (see enclosure), would be circulated as a document of the General Assembly, under agenda item 63, and of the Security Council.

(*Signed*) Volkan **Vural**
Ambassador
Permanent Representative

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Annex to the letter dated 19 May 2000 from the Permanent Representative of Turkey to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

I have the honour to convey herewith a copy of the letter dated 15 May 2000 addressed to you by H.E. Mr. Rauf R. Denktaş, President of the Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus, concerning the recent unilateral goodwill measures announced by the Turkish Cypriot side with the aim of further enhancing the living standards of the Greek Cypriots and Maronites residing in the Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus (see enclosure).

I should be grateful if you would have the present letter and its annex circulated as a document of the General Assembly, under agenda item 63, and of the Security Council.

(*Signed*) Aytuğ **Plümer**
Representative
Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus

Enclosure

As I have already informed your Special Adviser on Cyprus Mr. Alvaro de Soto, during the second round of proximity talks held in Geneva from 31 January to 10 February 2000, we were contemplating announcing a number of unilateral good will measures aimed at further enhancing the living standards of the Greek Cypriot and Maronite residents of the Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus.

On 5 May 2000, the Council of Ministers of the Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus announced these measures, the English translation of which is attached for your perusal, in the form of a statement issued by the Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Defence.

I hope that these measures will be received by the Greek Cypriot side in the same spirit of good will that they have been made.

(*Signed*) Rauf R. **Denktaş**
President

Statement by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Defence

The Council of Ministers of the Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus announced the following measures on 5 May 2000:

1. All visa fees and exit charges except for one pound sterling processing fee or its equivalent in local currency (Turkish lira), have been waived. Monthly multiple entry and exit charge is ten pounds sterling or its equivalent in local currency (Turkish lira).

2. Greek Cypriots and Maronites who cross over to the Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus to visit their close relatives can stay in the Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus for a reasonable period by virtue of a permit given by the Ministry concerned. Application for extending the duration of stay for family and health reasons or other extenuating circumstances will be entertained by the said Ministry upon proper application.

3. The age restriction applied to Greek Cypriot students who are yet to fulfil military service and are continuing their education in Southern Cyprus who wish to visit their families (parents or grandparents) in the Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus has been lifted.

The applicants have to produce the necessary documentation for proof of age and studentship.

4. In the event that a Greek Cypriot or Maronite residing in the Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus marries a Greek Cypriot or Maronite or any other third party national residing outside Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus territory, the spouse, on proof of marriage by production of relevant documents, will be permitted to take up residency in the Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus in accordance with relevant Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus legislation.

5. Freedom of movement throughout the territory of the Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus, on par with Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus citizens, is ensured.

6. Any Maronite or Greek Cypriot residing in the Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus may apply for Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus citizenship.

7. The above permits may be withdrawn at any time for reasons of security or law and order.